

STRAIGHT ARROW

No. 5

Don't miss
**"STRAIGHT
ARROW'S
GREAT
LEAP!"**
in this issue



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ANIMAL TRICKS



By bending Fury's left leg with his left hand while continuing the pull on the rope and repeating the word "KNEEL"

Fury knelt

"PRAY"



From the kneeling position Straight Arrow taught Fury to pray by continuing the pull on the rope and repeating the word "PRAY".

A rope is used to help put a horse in position until he learns what his master wants him to do.

Squeeze and push down on the withers

Push head down

Fold front legs under



Straight Arrow taught his dog to bow and pray using the same commands, but exerting pressure with his hands instead of the rope. You can teach your horse or dog tricks such as lying down, sitting-up, etc., in much the same manner.

How to teach your Pal to Kneel and Pray

Straight Arrow taught Fury to bow by first tying a rope to Fury's halter, then passing it between his front legs, up his right shoulder and across his withers, (See card No. 28) Straight Arrow then pulled on the rope which exerted downward pressure on Fury's withers and at the same time brought his head down.



He then rewarded Fury with words, pats and a carrot. He repeated this practice many times at frequent intervals until Fury would kneel without the pull of the rope. "KNEEL"



Straight Arrow helped Fury to bow without the aid of the rope by touching him on the withers and knees with a whip.

STRAIGHT ARROW

MAN OR PHANTOM? IT DIDN'T EVER SEEM POSSIBLE THAT SUCH A PERSON AS STRAIGHT ARROW COULD DIE—BUT, DIDN'T THEY SEE HIM KILLED WITH THEIR OWN EYES? AND TO EVERYONE—EVEN TO PACKY—THE DEATHLY PALE FIGURE WITH THE STARK BURNING EYES, WHO ROSE FROM THE PLACE WHERE STRAIGHT ARROW FELL IN BATTLE, COULD ONLY BE—

"THE GHOST OF STRAIGHT ARROW!"

Fred Meagher

IT'S—IT'S STRAIGHT ARROW'S GHOST!

IT ALL STARTED BECAUSE STRAIGHT ARROW WAS THE KIND OF PERSON HE WAS—A FEARLESS, DASHING FIGURE, RELENTLESSLY FIGHTING INJUSTICE AND LAWLESSNESS...



...BECAUSE STRAIGHT ARROW SEEMED TO BE EVERYWHERE AT ONCE, NO OUTLAW COULD ESCAPE THE INEVITABLE ATTACK OF THIS GREAT COMANCHE ON HIS PALOMINO STALLION. MYSTERIOUSLY, STRAIGHT ARROW SEEMED TO KNOW WHEREVER CRIME WOULD STRIKE NEXT—AND HE WAS ALWAYS ON THE SPOT...

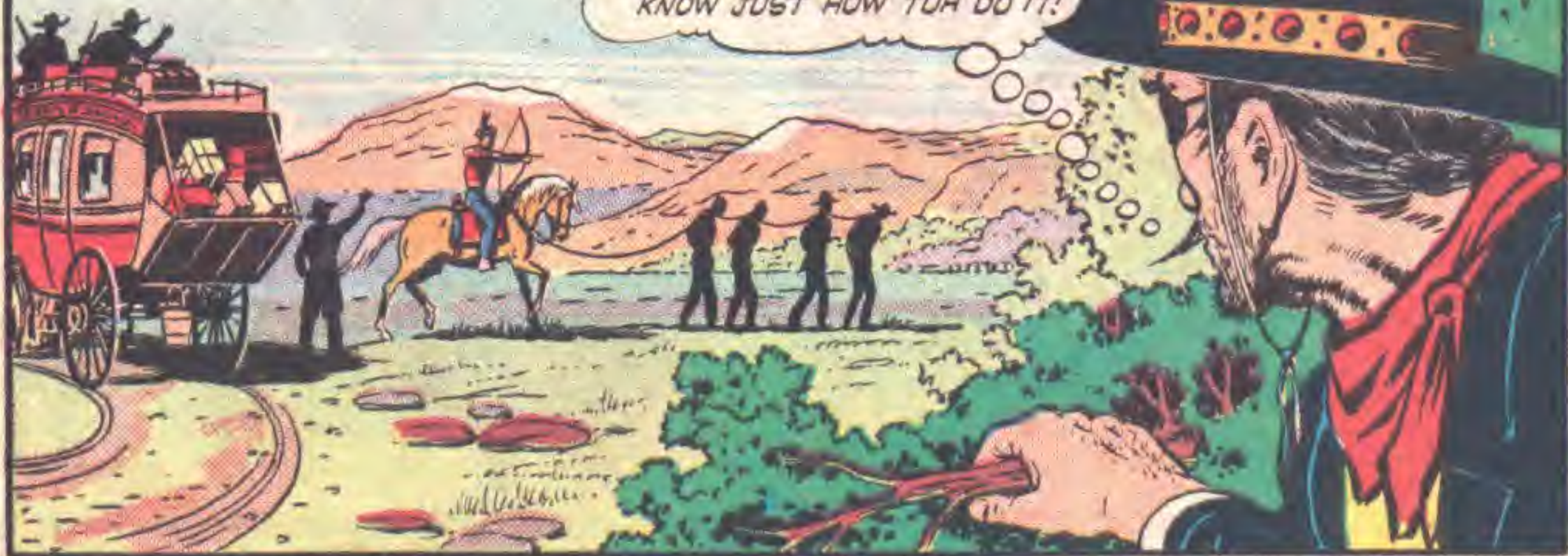


KANEEE-WAHHH!

Yiiii! AGAIN! HOW DOES HE KNOW...?

...YES, STRAIGHT ARROW WAS THE JINX TO THE PLANS OF EVIL MEN. ...UNTIL ONE OUTLAW, BY THE NAME OF SLEET, DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!

BLAST THE INJUN! I CAN'T NEVER START A SINGLE JOB WITHOUT THE HOMBRE BUSTIN' IT UP! WE GOT TO GIT RID O' HIM—AN' IT'S NOW OR NEVER!...AN' I KNOW JUST HOW TUH DO IT!



SLEET SENT WORD BY THE UNDERGROUND TO ALL THE OUTLAW CHIEFS IN THE TERRITORY, ASKING THEM TO MEET HIM.

OKAY, SLEET, HYAR WE BE, LIKE YUH ASKED—AN' WE LEFT OUR MEN HIDIN' IN THUH ARROYOS OUTSIDE O' TOWN. WHUT'S UP?

LISSEN TUH ME, MEN! **SEPARATELY** WE CAIN'T DO NOTHIN' AGAINST STRAIGHT ARROW... RIGHT? — BUT **TOGETHER**, WE KIN LICK THE BUZZARD!



BUT LOOK HYAR, SLEET—WON'T STRAIGHT ARROW KNOW SOMETHIN'S UP? HE KNOWS US ALL—AN' A LOT O' PEOPLE SAW US COME INTUH TOWN. I BETCHA HE KNOWS WE'RE HYAR RIGHT NOW!

THAT'S JEST WHUT I WANT HIM TO DO! WE'LL **TRAP** HIM!



AN' WHUT'S MORE—WE'RE GOIN' OUT NOW AN' MAKE SURE EVERYBODY SEES US STUDYIN' THE STAGECOACH SCHEDULE. LET STRAIGHT ARROW, WHEREVER HE IS, THINK WE'RE GOIN' TUH HOLD UP THE NEXT STAGE. HE'LL RIDE OUT TUH PERFECT IT, SEE? WE'LL BE THERE, ALL RIGHT...



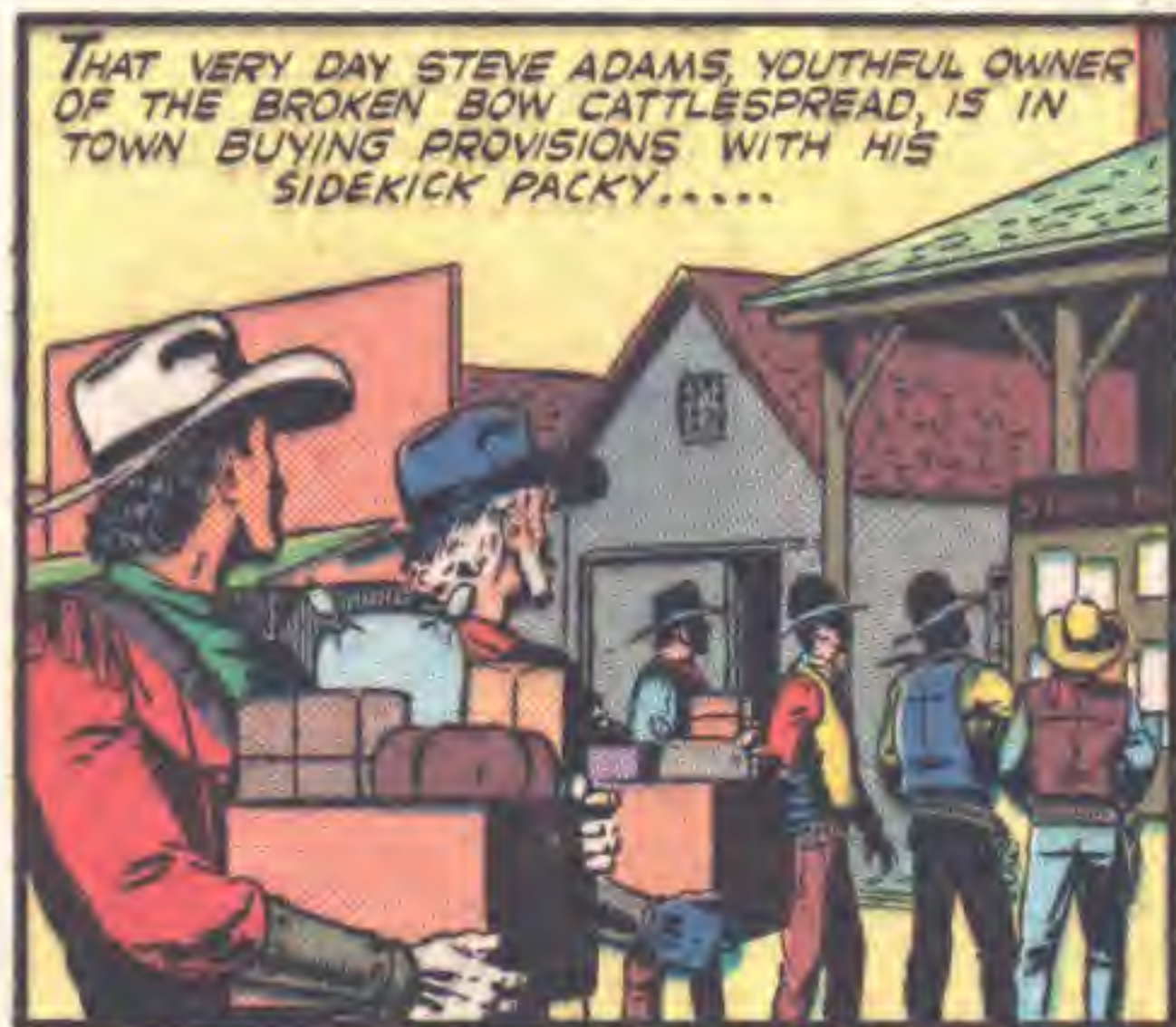
...BUT WHAT HE DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT IS OUR OWLHOOT ARMY OF 50 MEN WE GOT HIDDEN IN THE ARROYOS. IT'LL BE A TRAP—A PERFECT **AMBUSH!** WE CIRCLE HIM WITH A SOLID RING O' LEAD—AND **WIPE 'IM OUT!**... LET'S GO!

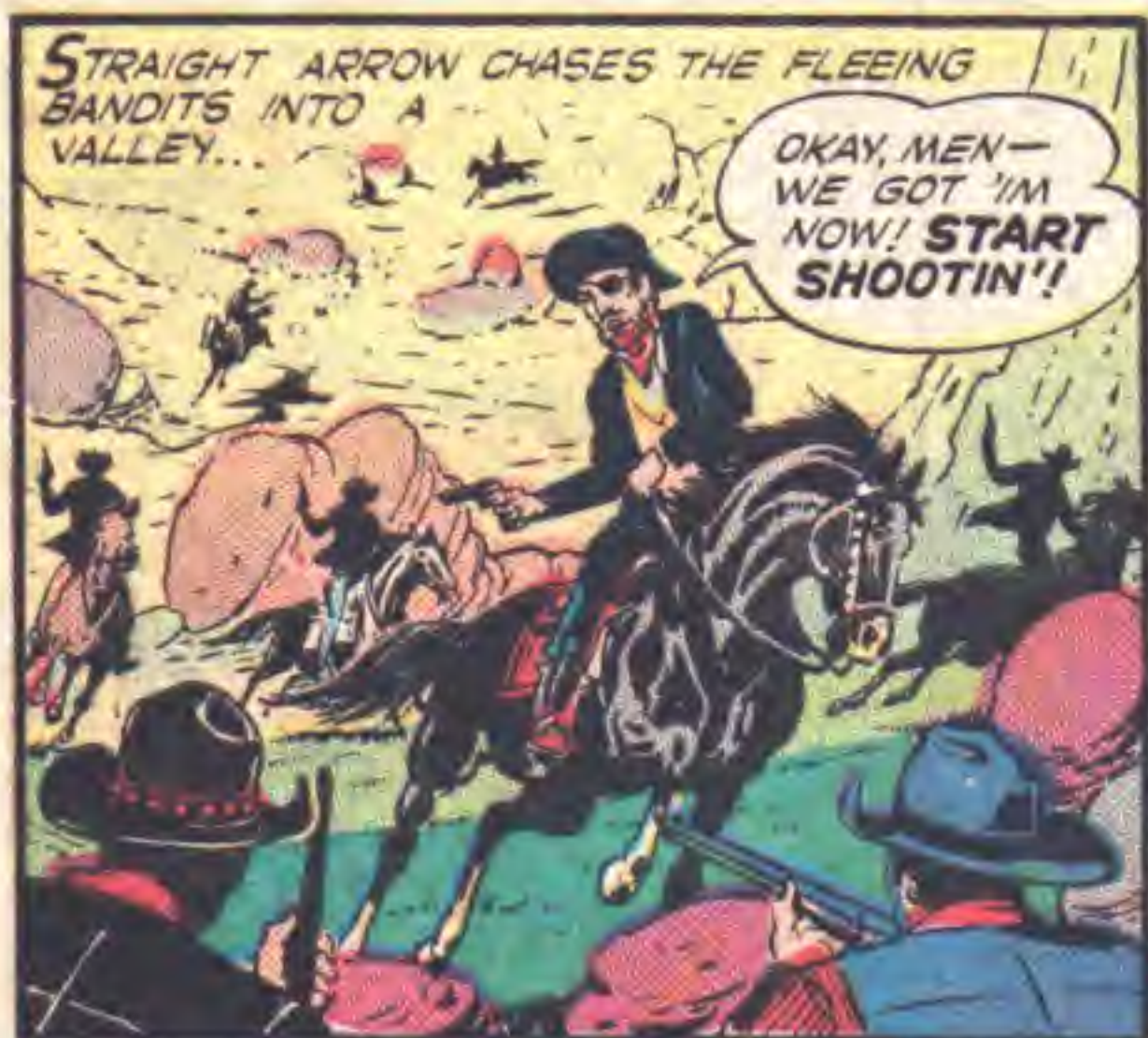


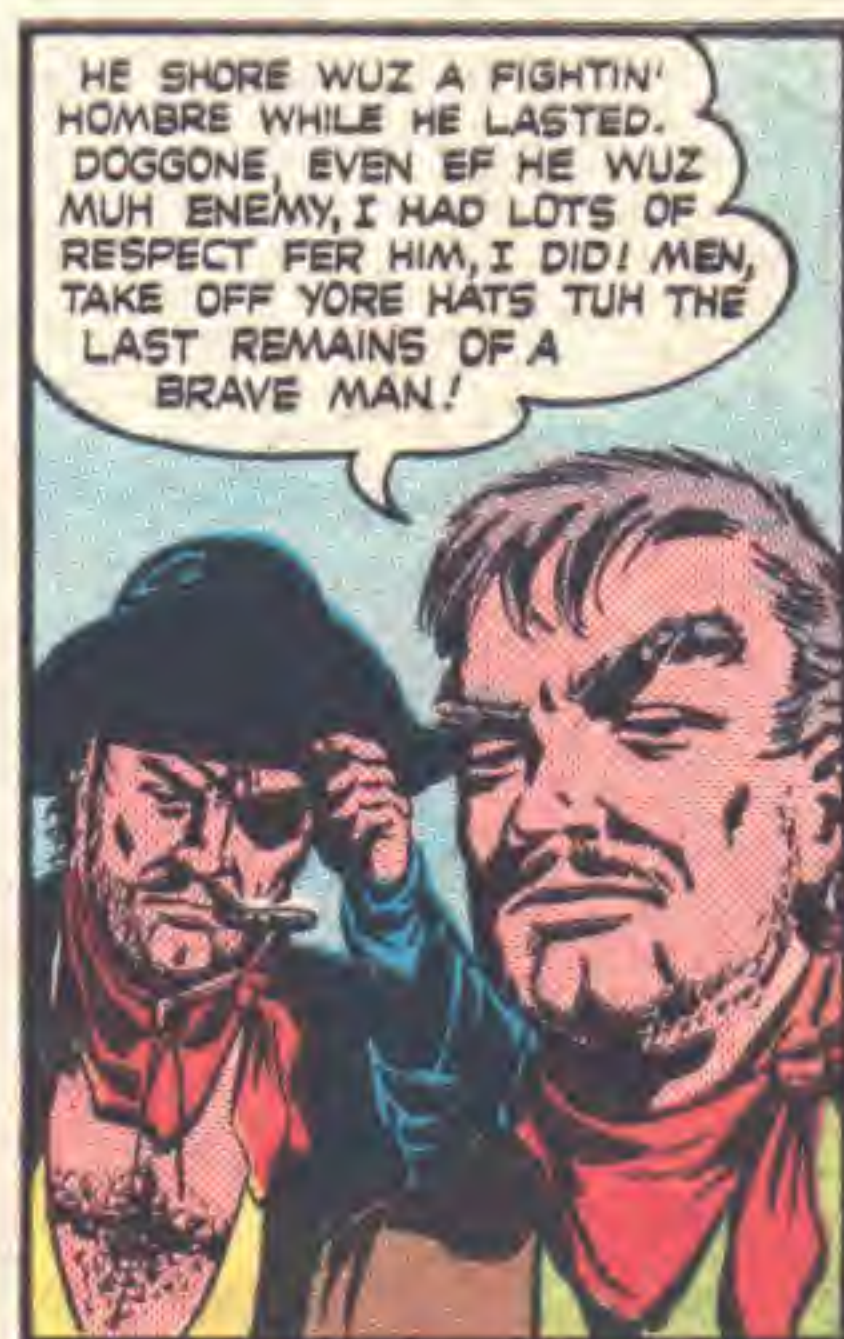
AN' IT'S A PERFECT TIME TUH PULL THIS PLAN—'CAUSE THE FEDERAL TROOPS IS OUTA TOWN ON MANEUVERS.

YUH'RE A SMART HOMBRE, SLEET! **THIS IS IT, MEN!** STRAIGHT ARROW AIN'T GOIN' TUH BOTHER US NO MORE!









MEANWHILE...

WAL, I GOT THUH COLONEL
ALL RIGHT AN' HE SAID HE'D
COME ALONG THE STAGE ROAD
SOON'S HE COULD GIT HIS
TROOPS TOGETHER. BUT GOSH—
I JEST GOT A FUNNY
FEELIN'...! GIDDAP,
PAINT!



FURY!
ALONE!

OH,
GOLLY,
OH,
GOLLY!



HE'S NEIGHIN' AND
SNORTIN'! GOSH,
IF HE COULD
ONLY TALK!
WHAT'S HE
TRYIN' TO SAY?
HE WANTS
ME TUH
FOLLER HIM—
THAT'S
WHUT!...
LEAD ON,
FURY—I'M
COMIN'!



HE STOPPED AT THUH TOP O'
THET HILL—AS THOUGH
SOMETHIN' TURRIBLE'S
ON THUH OTHER SIDE!
IF ANYTHIN'S
HAPPENED TUH
STRAIGHT
ARROW...!



AN ARMY OF OWLHOOTS!
AN' WHO'S THET LYIN'
LIKE DAID ON
THUH GROUND?

IT'S STRAIGHT
ARROW! THUH
VARMINTS
GOT HIM
AT LAST!



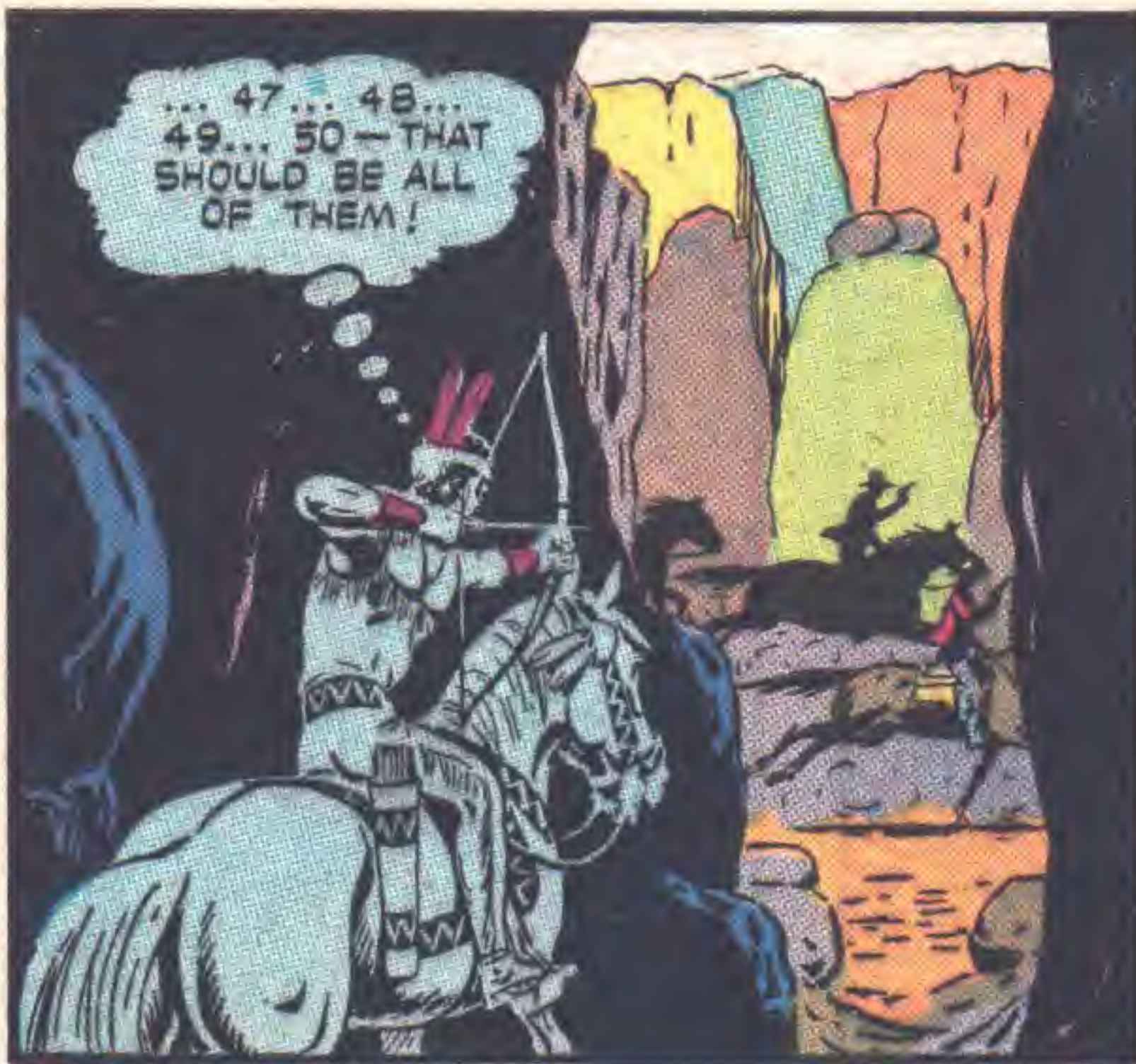
OH, STRAIGHT ARROW—OH, WHUT'LL
I DO, WHUT'LL I DO? HIS FACE IS
PALE AS DEATH ITSELF—
HE'S DAID!



GULP! OH, LORDY, HE—I
MEAN IT—NO, HE'S
MOVIN'—GETTIN'
UP!







... 47... 48...
49... 50—THAT
SHOULD BE ALL
OF THEM!



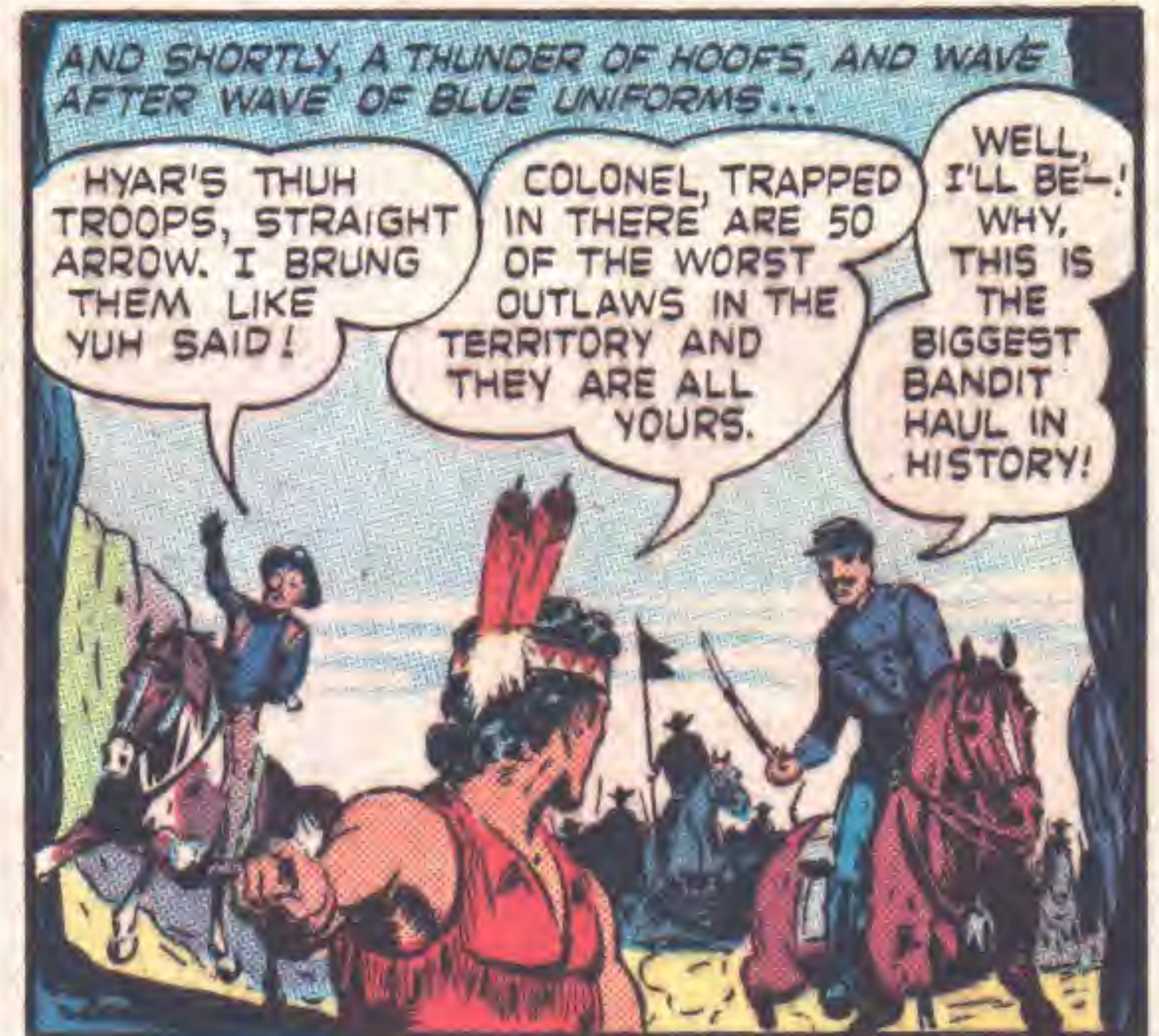
DISAPPEARED! GULP!
JEST PLAIN VANISHED!
MEBBE—HE IS A
GHOST!

YEAH—AN' MEBBE
THIS IS A TRAP!
I DON'T LIKE THIS
BOTTLENECK PLACE
AT ALL—LET'S
GIT OUT!



THE NEXT ARROW WILL
GO THROUGH YOUR HEART,
EVIL MAN! NOBODY
GETS OUT OF SATAN'S
BOWL ALIVE!

Yiiii! BACK! BACK
EVERYBODY! HE'S GOT
THIS PASS COVERED
FROM THE OUTSIDE!



AND SHORTLY, A THUNDER OF HOOFS, AND WAVE
AFTER WAVE OF BLUE UNIFORMS...

HYAR'S THUH
TROOPS, STRAIGHT
ARROW. I BRUNG
THEM LIKE
YUH SAID!

COLONEL, TRAPPED
IN THERE ARE 50
OF THE WORST
OUTLAWS IN THE
TERRITORY AND
THEY ARE ALL
YOURS.

WELL,
I'LL BE—!
WHY,
THIS IS
THE
BIGGEST
BANDIT
HAUL IN
HISTORY!



STRAIGHT ARROW, I WANT YUH
TUH KNOW THET I'LL ALWAYS
BE FAITHFUL TUH YORE MEMORY
—AN' I'LL DO WHUT YUH SAY,
EVEN IF YUH ARE A GHOST!
MEBBE—GULP—MEBBE—SOME
DAY WE'LL MEET AGAIN IN
TUH HAPPY
HUNTIN'
GROUNDS!

BUT, PACKY—
I'M NOT
A GHOST!



NO?
BUT
YOUR
FACE
...YOUR
EYES...

OF COURSE NOT!
HERE, LET ME USE
YOUR BANDANA. YOU
SEE, IT'S JUST CO-
MANCHE WARPAINT
THAT I PUT ON IN A
HURRY. **PLAYING**
DEAD WAS JUST
THE ONLY WAY OUT
OF A VERY TIGHT
SITUATION!



KANEEE-
WAHHH!

WAL, I'M A
RING-TAILED
PIGEON-TOED,
LOP-EARED
DINGALOOSA!

STRAIGHT ARROW

SHE WAS A WOMAN, ALONE, IN A NEW AND WILD COUNTRY WHERE JUSTICE SPOKE FROM THE MOUTHS OF GUNS! BUT SHE WAS A FIGHTER, THIS WOMAN—AND IT DID NOT TAKE HER LONG TO LEARN THE TRIGGER LAW OF THE WEST IN HER —
"MISSION OF HATE!"



IT'S SUNSET, PETE DEAR, AND JUNIOR NEEDS SOME SLEEP. HADN'T WE BETTER STOP HERE FOR THE NIGHT?

WE'LL DO THAT—EVEN THOUGH IT'S JUST A COUPLE OF HOURS MORE UNTIL WE REACH HOME. WHOA THERE!

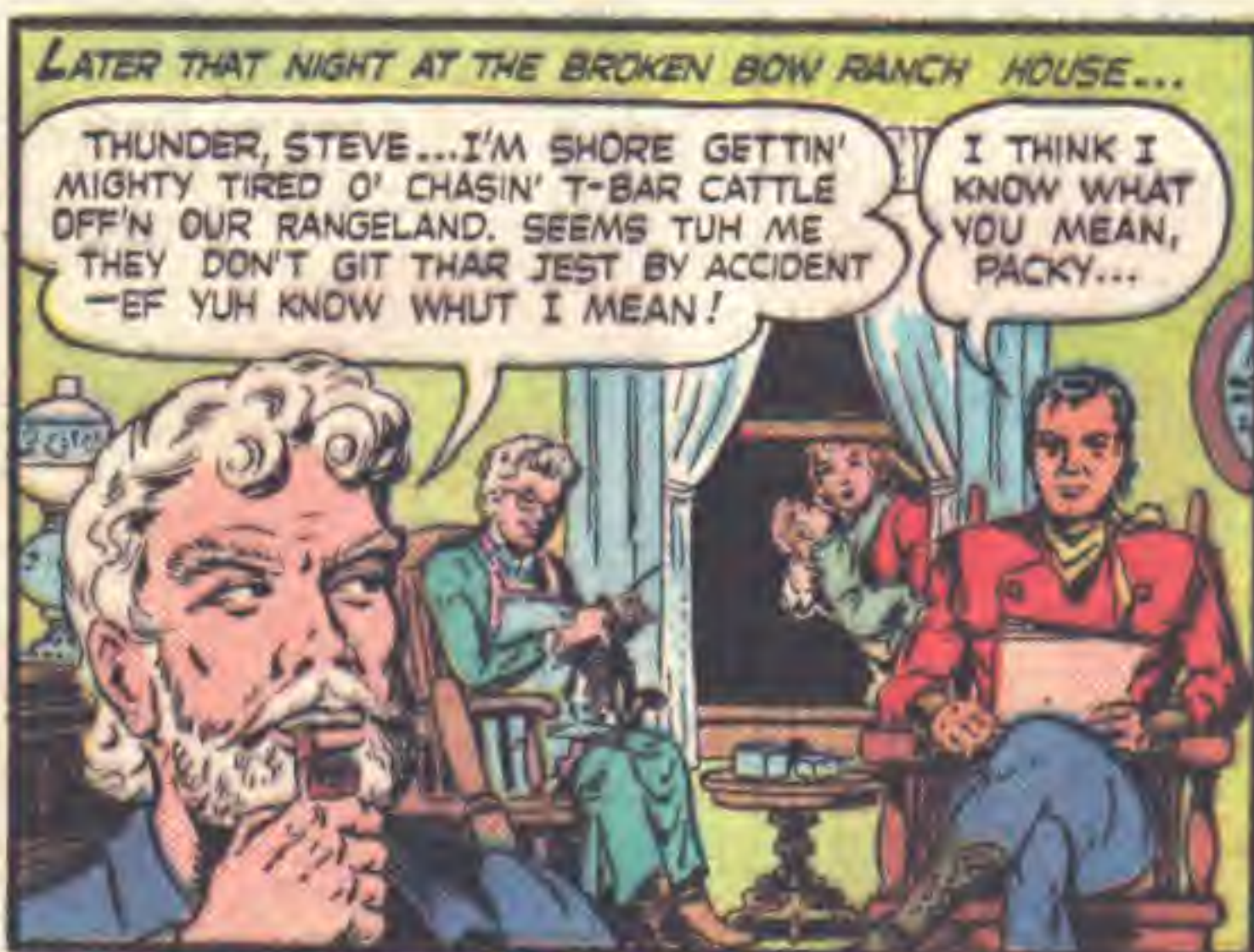


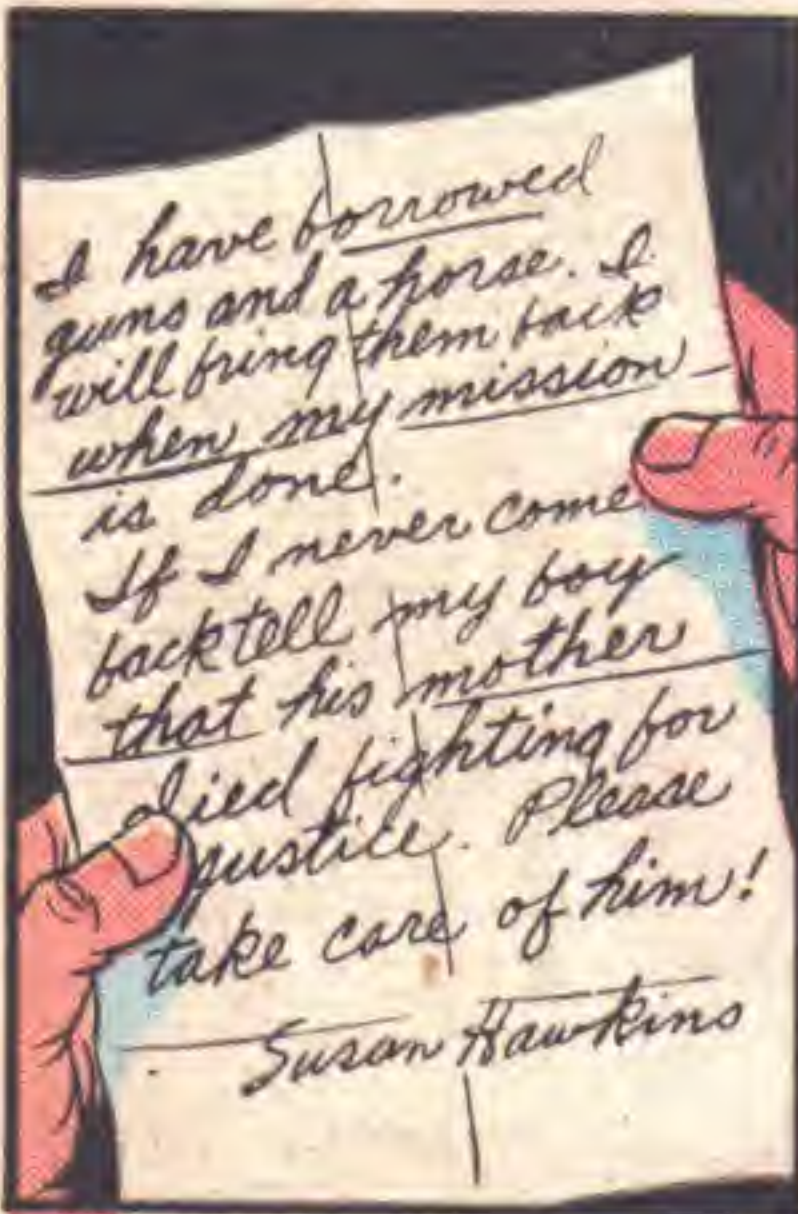
HOME! GOSH, IT'S BEEN FIVE YEARS SINCE I LEFT MY RANCH IN CARE OF MY FOREMAN, HOOT SLEDDER, AND WENT EAST TO COLLEGE. I WROTE HOOT I WAS COMING—HE'LL SURE BE GLAD TO SEE ME.

I BET HE'LL BE SURPRISED THAT YOU'RE BRINGING A WIFE AND CHILD!



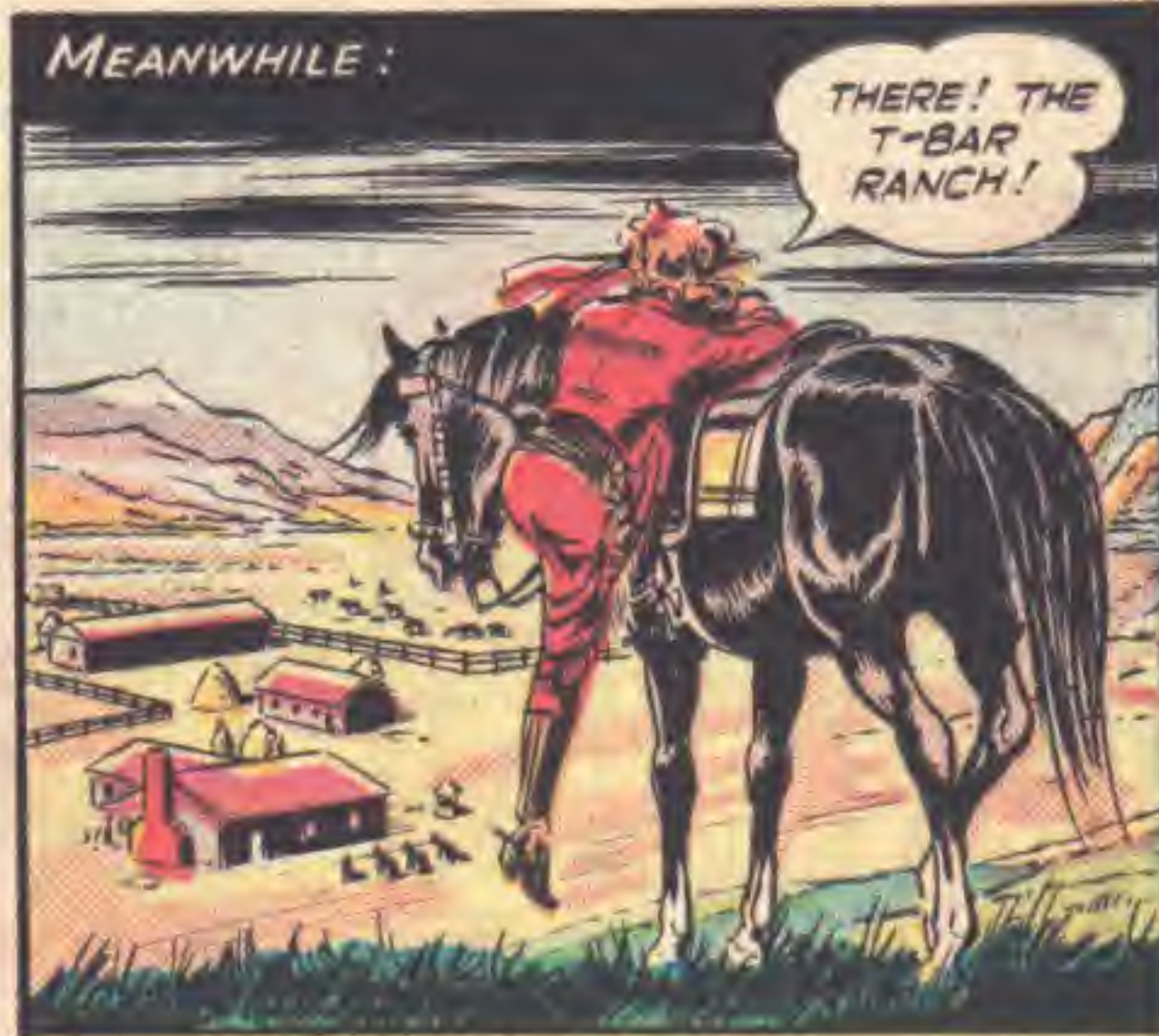






BUT STEVE ADAMS IS NOT A
MAN TO SIT IDLY BY WHILE
OTHERS ARE IN TROUBLE.....





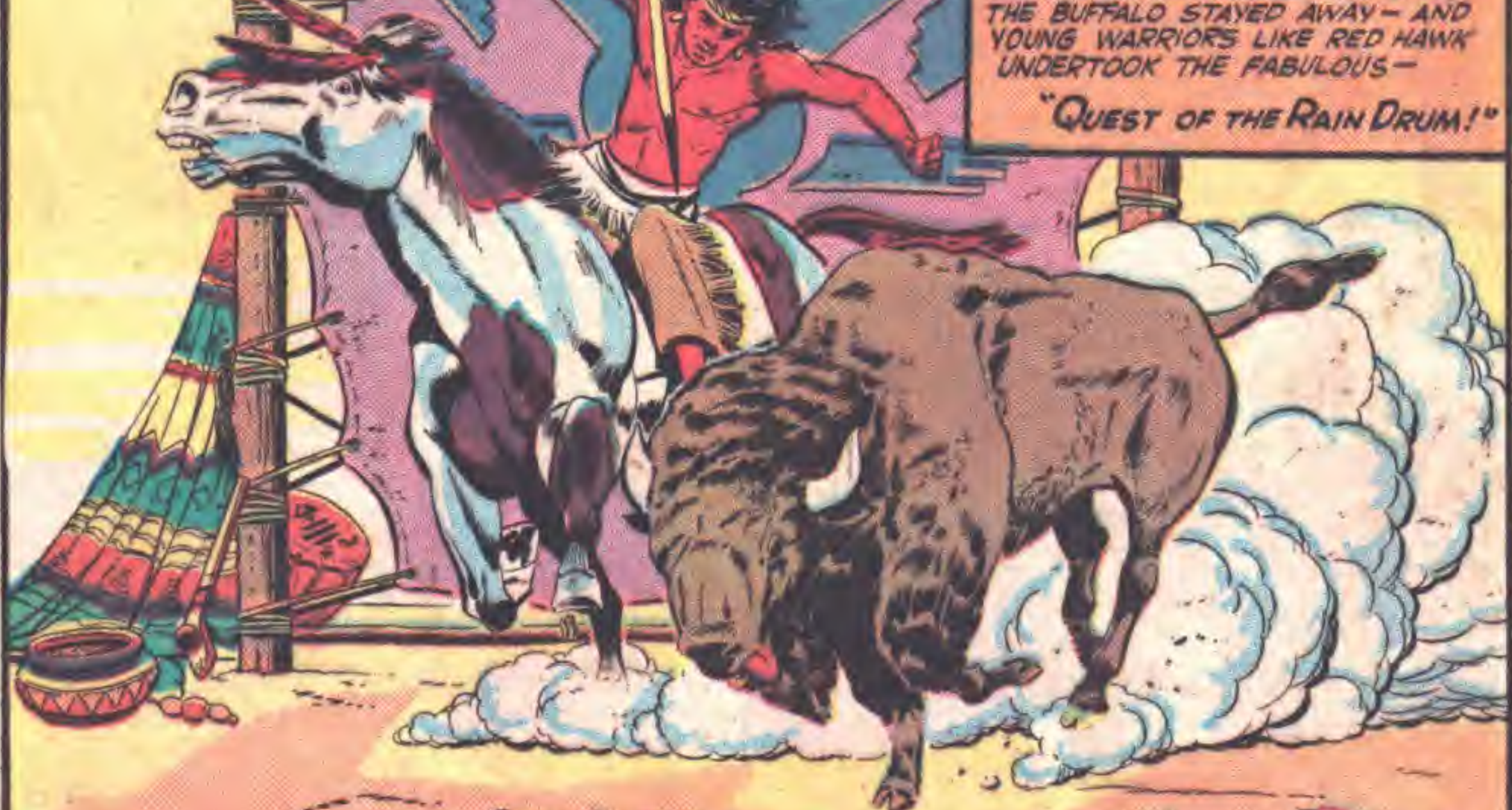




RED HAWK

EVERY FEW YEARS THE GREAT PLAINS OF THE WEST GO DRY. WHEN THE WHITE MAN CAME, HE BROUGHT IRRIGATION AND WELLS, BUT BEFORE THAT, THE DRY YEARS MEANT FAMINE AND DEATH TO THE INDIAN NATIONS. THE GRASS SHRIVELLED AND DIED, THE BUFFALO STAYED AWAY - AND YOUNG WARRIORS LIKE RED HAWK UNDERTOOK THE FABULOUS -

"QUEST OF THE RAIN DRUM!"



Powell

THE SUN BLAZES DOWN FROM THE ENDLESSLY BLUE, CLEAR SKIES AS HALF A DOZEN YOUNG EXHAUSTED CHEYENNE WARRIORS CROSS THE SCORCHING FLATS...

NO RAIN NOW FOR TWO MOONS! EVERYTHING DIES!

FROM THE DRY FARMS OF THE WICHITAS AND CADDOES TO THE NORTHERNMOST RANGES OF THE BLACKFEET, THERE IS DRY PARCHED LAND... AND A DYING PEOPLE.

NO WATER, ANYWHERE!



WE HAVE RIDDEN FROM HORIZON TO HORIZON! NOWHERE ARE THERE ANY BUFFALO! THE LAKES ARE DRIED! THE WATERHOLES ARE DUST!

SIGH! IT IS THE END! EVEN THE NAVAJOS AND APACHES DIE OF THIRST! EVERYWHERE THE GOOD MANITOU TURNS HIS FACE AWAY FROM HIS PEOPLE!

HERE AND THERE, GRAVES DOT THE HILLSIDES BEHIND THE CHEYENNE TEPEES. WITHOUT WATER, THERE IS SICKNESS AND DEATH. WITH GRAVE FACE, WHITE BULL HEARS THE DEATH KNELL OF HIS NATION...

NEITHER THE WICHITA OR CADDO HAVE FOOD. WITHOUT WATER THEIR CROPS AND GARDENS DIE!

IF ONLY WE COULD FIND THE RAIN DRUM OF WHICH OUR LEGENDS TELL! -A GREAT DRUM THAT BRINGS THE RAIN WHEN IT IS HAMMERED BY THE DRUMSTICKS OF OUR WARRIORS!

THE RAIN DRUM! WHERE IS IT?

YES! YES!

THE DRUM!

WHERE? WHERE?

IT HANGS IN A VAST CAVE! IT IS GUARDED BY DEMONS AND SPIRITS! NO MAN WHO IS NOT A GREAT GOOD MAN CAN TAKE IT DOWN! BUT IT WILL BRING RAIN! THAT IS KNOWN! AND THREE MUST GO - ONLY THREE! THAT IS THE TRIBAL LAW!

OUT OF THE DUSTY, DYING VILLAGE RED HAWK RIDES! WITH HIM GALLOPS TROTTERING BEAR AND LOOKS-BEHIND HIM... THREE YOUNG WARRIORS OFFERING THEIR LIVES THAT OTHERS MIGHT HAVE WATER...

TIE'TSIE GA, MY BROTHERS! RIDE!

NORTHWARD, DAY AFTER DAY THEY RIDE. WATCHING THEM ARE ARAPAHO EYES, MADE SULLEN AND ANGRY BY THE DRYNESS THAT DRINKS DEEP OF MEN'S STRENGTH AND PATIENCE...

THREE CHEYENNE! SACRIFICES TO THE SPIRITS FOR RAIN! AHAGO! AHAGO!



ARAPAHOS! AND THERE IS MADNESS IN THEIR FACES!



TAKE THEM ALIVE!

TAGA! TAGA!

TO ME, TROT-
TING BEAR!
THIS WAY, LOOKS
BEHIND-HIM!



WE WIN THROUGH!

CHAKA, CHAKA!
WE HAVE BROKEN
THE RING!

AND THEN, OUT OF THE HOWLING FURY OF THE ARAPAHO WARRIORS, A BOWSTRING TWANGS, AND AN ARROW FLESHES ITSELF IN LOOKS-BEHIND-HIM'S SHOULDER...

WAHHH! A LUCKY HIT! — MY BROTHERS — RIDE FOR THE UPPER HILLS! THERE WILL BE A PATH BEYOND... WE MAY YET MAKE A STAND!



RIDE ON, BROTHERS! LOOKS-BEHIND-HIM STAYS HERE! MY RIGHT ARM IS UNWOUNDED! I WILL DELAY THE ARAPAHO DOGS!

AND AS RED HAWK AND TROT-
TING BEAR RIDE ON FOR THE
FABLED CAVE OF THE RAIN DRUM,
LOOKS-BEHIND-HIM SINGS HIS
DEATH SONG AND THROWS HIMSELF
AT THE ARAPAHO WARRIORS...



CHEN AWA TEI! TSEI NA GO!

ON AND ON FIGHTS LOOKS-BEHIND-HIM, THE SUN IS SETTING AS HE FINALLY GOES DOWN BEFORE THE THUDDING IMPACT OF A WILDLY HURLED WAR-HAMMER...



THE PATH IS OPEN! TAGA! TAGA! ON...

NNNGG...

BUT RED HAWK AND TROTTER BEAR ARE FAR BEYOND THE NARROW MOUNTAIN PASS... ALL NIGHT THEY RIDE, AND DAWN FINDS THEM PICKING THEIR WAY THROUGH A STRANGE, TORTURED LAND WHERE CLIFFS TOWER HIGH AND THE ROCKS ARE QUEERLY DISTORTED...

WE HAVE COME TO THE RIM OF THE WORLD!

AIHEE! IT IS A FRIGHTENING LAND, THIS!

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON.

TWO NIGHTS LATER, EXHAUSTED, THE VOYAGERS SLEEP—WHILE BLACK-PAINTED CROW WARRIORS CREEP TOWARD THEIR UNCONSCIOUS FORMS...



BUT RED HAWK IS NOT UNREADY. HE HAS SCATTERED A RING OF DRY, CRISP TWIGS AROUND THE FIRELESS CAMP, AND, AS A FOOT STEPS DOWN, THE TWIGS CRACKLE LOUDLY...



AWAKE, TROTTER BEAR! CROW KILLERS!



THE PONIES! TO THE PONIES BEFORE THE CROW HORSE-THIEVES CAN SNATCH THEM!



EDITOR'S NOTE: THE CROWS WERE KNOWN AS THE BEST HORSE-STEALERS OF ALL THE PLAINS INDIANS.

WE WILL MAKE IT!

TAGIA! WE CAUGHT THE CROW THIEVES BY SURPRISE! THEY DID NOT EXPECT US TO AWAKEN! THEY CAME FOR SCALPS FIRST—HORSES LAST!



WE'RE OFF! AWAY!





SEARCHING AND HUNTING, RED HAWK MOVES THROUGH THE LAND OF DRIPPING MISTS. BUT NOWHERE IS THERE A CAVE WITH A FABLED DRUM. THEN, ONE DAY—



GREETING, FATHER! KNOW YOU OF THE RAIN DRUM?

THERE IS NO RAIN DRUM, YOUNG MAN. THERE IS ONLY THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE MIND, AND THE ABILITY TO FORETELL WEATHER. AND YET... PERHAPS... THERE MAY BE A WAY... FOR YOU TO GET A RAIN DRUM...



THOSE ARE RAIN CLOUDS. THEY CONTAIN WATER. MUCH WATER. BUT HOW CAN YOU MAKE THEM SPILL THEIR WATER?

I DO NOT KNOW!

NOISE WILL DISTURB THE RAIN CLOUDS! NOISE! PLENTY NOISE! GO...FIND BIG BUFFALO. THE BIGGEST BUFFALO IN THE WORLD! KILL THEM. MAKE A BIG DRUM FROM THEIR HIDES. POUND IT WHEN YOU MAKE IT! POUND IT HARD! MAKE PLENTY NOISE!*

SO RED HAWK RIDES INTO THE LAND OF THE BLACKFEET, THE LAND OF THE EVERLASTING HILLS, THE TAY-A-BE-SHOCK-UP.* HERE HE HUNTS THE BUFFALO...

HA HIA! THIS IS THE BIGGEST BUFFALO ANY CHEYENNE HAS EVER SEEN!

*EDITOR'S NOTE: THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME SCIENTIFIC BASIS IN FACT FOR THE THEORY THAT NOISE WILL SPILL A RAINHEAD CLOUD. AFTER MODERN BATTLES, WHEN ARTILLERY AND CANNON FIRE HAVE SOUNDED, HEAVY RAINS OFTEN FALL.



*RED NOTE: MONTANA.



HE IS DOWN! ONE MORE SKIN WILL BE ENOUGH TO MAKE THE RAIN DRUM!

DAY AFTER DAY, RED HAWK HUNTS THE PLAINS OF MONTANA, PRAYING TO HIS GODS FOR ONE MORE GIANT BUFFALO. BUT THE HERDS ARE GONE, AND OVERCOME WITH DESPAIR, RED HAWK TURNS HOMEWARD...

ONE HIDE WILL NOT MAKE A BIG DRUM! WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SUMMON THE RAIN SPIRITS FROM THE CLOUDS! THEY WILL NOT HEAR US!



BUT LISTEN! THE GROUND IS SHAKING! IT QUIVERS AND TREMBLES! IT SOUNDS AS IF GIANTS WERE RUNNING!





BUFFALO! A HUGE HERD!
SO MANY THAT THEIR HOOFS SHAKE
THE VERY EARTH! SOMEWHERE IN
AMONG THEM IS THE BIG ONE
I SEEK!



WAAGGHN! HE STUMBLES!
HE FALLS! MY LANCE HAS
BROUGHT HIM DOWN!

NOW RED HAWK RIDES WITH LIGHT
HEART. STRAPPED BEHIND HIM ARE
THE TWO LARGEST BUFFALO HIDES
IN ALL THE WORLD!...HE IS CAUTIOUS
RIDING THROUGH THE LAND OF THE
CROWS, UNTIL A VOICE HAILS HIM...

DO MY EYES LIE?
AM I DREAMING?

TROTTING
IT BEAR!



MANY MILES FURTHER ON... RED
HAWK AND TROTTER BEAR HELP A
WEAK AND THIN LOOKS-BEHIND-HIM
DOWN FROM ROCKY CAVE...

THEY DID NOT KILL
ME. I CRAWLED
AWAY. HID IN THIS
CAVE. ALL I NEED
IS FOOD...WATER...

RED HAWK
FILLED A SKIN
BAG WITH WATER
IN THE LAND OF
DRIPPING MISTS.
YOU WILL GET
SOME.



THE THREE VOYAGERS REACH
HOME AT LAST, AND THE MED-
ICINE MEN MAKE THE DRUM. IT
IS THE BIGGEST DRUM ANYONE
HAS EVER SEEN, EVEN THE
VERY OLD MEN. AND WHEN THE
DRUM IS READY, RED HAWK
WATCHES THE SKY FOR RAIN
CLOUDS...

THERE THEY ARE!
THE WIND BLOWS THIS WAY!
THE DRUM! THE DRUM!



AND THEN, STEADILY AND UNCEASINGLY...

THRUM - PUM-A-PUM-PUM!



WHO KNOWS WHAT STRANGE LAWS
OF NATURE THE INDIAN OBEYED, AND
THAT OBEYED HIM? TRAPPERS AND
EARLY EXPLORERS HAVE TOLD
STRANGE TALES OF INDIAN 'MAGIC'.
SO, IS IT ANY WONDER THAT WHEN
THE GREAT DRUM SPOKE, THE RAIN
SPILLED DOWN IN TORRENTS...?



The Plains Indian:

THE COMANCHE

THE COMANCHES were the Cossacks of the Plains. They were fighters. They looked with scorn on the Indians who farmed, who lived in one spot for more than a few months. Not for the *nimenim*, as they called themselves, were the hoe and the hut! Instead, the grassy Plains was their floor, the blue bowl of sky their roof, the vast herds of buffalo their unending source of food!

The horse and the Comanche went together as naturally as fish and swimming. Mounted on their pinto or piebald ponies, they were the finest horsemanship of the entire world. Not even the Russian Cossacks, or the Uhlans of Imperial Germany, could match their feats of athletic daring. More than one military expert has called them the "finest natural cavalry" ever assembled.

From the earliest age, the Comanche youths were taught to ride. They could hang over the side of a galloping mount so that an enemy on the opposite side could see nothing—not even the mocassined foot that clung by some magnetic force to the bouncing rump, nor the hand twisted in the pony's long mane!

Before the coming of the horse, the Comanche had ranged the rivers and the wooded mountain areas bordering the plains. A branch of the Shoshonean stock, like the Bannocks, Utes and Shoshoni, they were powerful and muscular, but somewhat ungraceful on their feet. In 1714 the Comanche acquired the horse—and the change was drastic! Instead of being awkward, they became pictures of grace. It was almost as if the Comanche were made to sit a horse's back, so impressive was the difference.

It is not so strange, then, considering the great role the horse played in the Comanche culture, that the Comanches owned the biggest horse herds of all the Plains Indians. Close to Mexico, they swooped across the Rio Grande on horse-stealing raids, bringing back with them fleet Spanish steeds descended from Arabian stock. And when roving bands of Comanche warriors sighted a wild horse herd, out came their maguay lariats, and the chase was on!

While the *nimenim* were no great game-players, as were others of the Plains Indian tribes, they did excel in feats of horsemanship and in horse-racing. Almost childlike in their boastfulness and delight in these arts, the Comanche often gambled heavily on the outcome of races among themselves. Naturally, they lost horses in war and in accidents, but there were always plenty to draw from. It has been estimated that some Comanches owned as many as two hundred!

The Crow Indian is usually credited with being the world's best horse-thief—but the redmen themselves shake their heads and point to the Comanche in awe.

Supplementing their horse was their short ash bow, an ideal weapon for use on the back of a flying pony. In their fringed quivers were one hundred slender arrows: some bone-tipped, some set with thin steel slivers. It is small wonder, then, that the Comanche was so feared in battle. Dashing in, red throats quivering with the war-whoop, short bows twanging, sending thin needles of death through the hot Texas sunlight, dropping to the far side of their galloping ponies so as to present no target to the enemy, the *nimenin* rode with chins high, masters of their grassy plains.

The Comanche dwelt south of the Wichita Mountains, along the Red River and its tributaries, often ranging west and southward into Mexico. They selected camp sites by flowing water (rivers), but on their war or hunting parties, often traveled "dry", knowing with that sense of the true nomad, the locations of waterholes and rock sinks fed by deep springs.

A true Plains Indian tribe, the Comanche's culture was much the same as that of the other Plains Indians. In war they used the bow and arrow, the stone-hammer and pipe-axe, the round buffalo shield. They rarely wore the jackets of buckskin that the northern tribes used, but contended themselves with hip-high leggings fronted and backed by buckskin flaps.

The Comanche used the tepee, the universal dwelling of the Plains Indian, and decorated it, as did the others, with ornate

representations of his deeds in black and red and yellow pigments. By trading with the Navajo and Apache, the Comanche bought silver ornaments and belt buckles, and richly painted blankets. The Comanche stock-in-trade? Horses!

Although friendly to the Navajo and the Kiowas, the Comanche hated the Apaches with a fierce and deadly hatred. A young warrior would rather fight an Apache than eat buffalo steak. With the Kiowas, however, the Comanche had something of an unwritten alliance. They were friends, an unusual state of affairs between such warring tribes as the Comanche and Kiowa.

Four main branches dominated the Comanche family. There were the *quohada*, the *yapparika* (root eaters), the *noyika* (antelopes), and the *kotchatekas* (buffalo eaters). Tribal organization was loose, almost non-existent. The various bands of Comanches roamed from the Arkansas River south into Mexico much as they willed. There was no sun dance to bring them together; for some reason the *nimenim* never adopted this otherwise almost universal plains Indian custom.

The Comanche considered Quana Parker, son of a white girl (Cynthia Ann Parker), and Pahawka, a Comanche war chief, as their greatest warrior. It was Quana who led the attack on 'Dobe Walls in 1874, and who rode in President Theodore Roosevelt's inaugural parade in Washington, D. C. He did much good for his people after he had agreed to take up "the white man's way."

Essentially, the Comanche was a fighting man. Not for him the tilled gardens of the Wichitas and Caddoes. He grew no vegetables! He ate buffalo steaks, and stole fast horses, and shot a short, powerful bow. Since the early coming of the Spanish from Mexico, and the French from Louisiana, the Comanche fought the white man, as one more enemy to be added to the long list of Indian tribes.

Occasionally, the Comanche would trade with the whites, exchanging buffalo robes for horses, rifles and gunpowder. At a very early date, he was a power on the Plains. He fought the Spaniards and he fought the French, and since the Comanches stood at the top of the list when it came to cavalry (and what other form of army was effective on the vast plains?) he always won. As a matter of strict fact, no one ever truly conquered the Comanches. When Quana Parker brought them in to walk the road of peace with the white man, it was not a surrender. It was an agreement to stop fighting and to go live on a reservation; in other words, a peace treaty. But—not surrender!

In Taos, New Mexico, a great fair was held by the Spanish, every year. To Taos

came the Comanche tribes, in paint and blankets, heavy with buffalo hides and captives, and their herds of horses threw the dust skyward. With trading, the Comanche grew rich. It was an ideal life for an Indian—stealing horses, fighting to capture white men and sell them later to the other white men for ransom, hunting for buffalo and then trading the buffalo hides for rifles and gunpowder. And since the Comanche liked fighting so much, other tribes cast envious eyes at their riches, but left their bows hanging in their bow-cases, unstrung.

However, when the Americans moved westward, all this changed. Now the Comanche ran head-on into a tough breed of fighting men who were known as *the Texas Rangers!* The invention of the Colt revolver gave the Rangers a weapon that was to build its first reputation fighting these same Comanches in Texas. Soon the Rangers made the Comanche look with renewed respect on the white man as a fighter. It was the beginning of the end of the wild, free life for the *nimenim*.

A great portion of the Comanches' strength in war rested, as has been said, on their astounding horsemanship. There was one riding feat that gave them a reputation for invincibility, however, that must be mentioned. Two riders would gallop their horses at full speed, racing down on a prone Indian (in actual warfare, the prone Indian is a dead Indian, or one badly wounded. At exactly the same moment, they would bend from the saddle of buffalo hide and each grasp an arm and a leg of the prone warrior. In such fashion they would carry him off, either to safety and recovery, or to burial. Naturally, their enemies, when scanning the battlefields, found few Comanches either dead or wounded. They began to suspect the Comanches of never getting hurt, which in turn resulted in their fearfully scanning the horizons continually for sight of a line of racing, whooping Comanches bent on fight and glory.

Sometimes their enemies turned to the white man for help, as the Apaches did, back in 1757. The Spanish gladly agreed to build a fort to protect their Apache friends. But their strategy backfired. The Comanches, stung to anger by this double-dealing on the part of the Apache, rode in force, and on a late winter night in 1758, smashed the Apaches and Spanish so thoroughly that they never forgot it. And so the Comanche continued as king of the plains—until the coming of the Americans.

Today, the Comanches live in Oklahoma on the Kiowa reservation. They number around 2000.

THE END







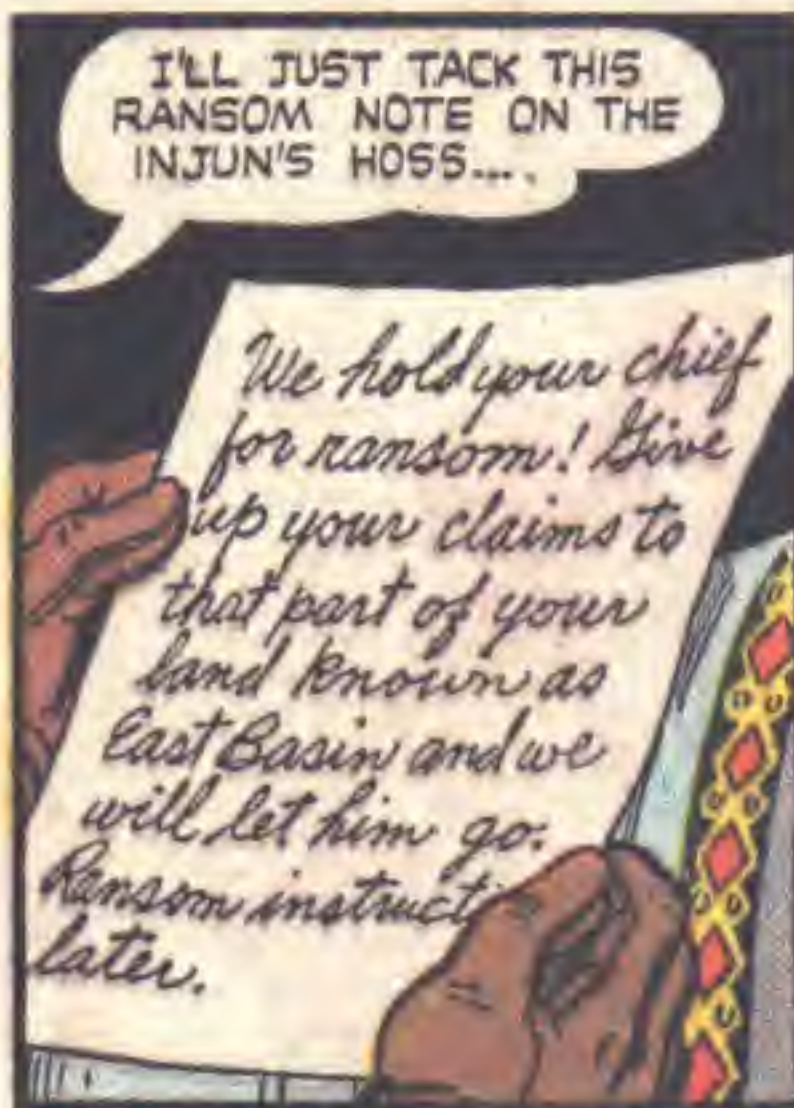
THE VALIANT INDIAN CHIEF
FIGHTS BRAVELY...

STUNNER, DO
SOMETHIN! THIS
INJUN'S STRONG
AS AN OX!



...BUT TO NO AVAIL, FOR THE
SNEAKY TACTICS OF THE
OUTLAWS ARE
TOO MUCH
FOR HIM...

OKAY, MEN,
TIE HIM
UP!



I'LL JUST TACK THIS
RANSOM NOTE ON THE
INJUN'S HOSS...

*We hold your chief
for ransom! Give
up your claims to
that part of your
land known as
East Basin and we
will let him go.
Ransom instructions
later.*



...AND SEND THUH
HOSS HOME!
SLING THET INJUN
OVER A SADDLE
AND LET'S GIT
TUH OUR HIDE-
OUT!

BUT,
STUNNER...
WHAT EF
THUH CO-
MANCHES WON'T
GO FER THET
RANSOM
STUFF AN' DE-
CLARE WAR IN-
STEAD?



LET 'EM DECLARE WAR! IT
WILL BRING IN THE TROOPS,
WHO'LL KILL OFF MOST OF
THUH COMANCHES AN' PUSH
EM' OFF THEIR LAND. RANSOM
OR NO RANSOM—WE'LL GIT
THUH EAST BASIN FER
OURSELVES!



...'CAUSE WE KIN SIT OUT
ANY WAR...RIGHT HYAR ON
TOP IN OUR HIDEOUT, WHAR
WE GOT FOOD ENOUGH FER
MONTHS! THIS ROPE LADDER'S
THUH ONLY WAY TO GIT UP—
WHY, SHUCKS, WE COULD
HOLD OFF THUH ARMY AN'
THUH WHOLE INJUN NATION
IF WE HAD TUH!



NEXT DAY STEVE AND PACKY
ARE SWAPPING YARNS WITH THE
SHERIFF, WHEN...

WHAT THUH—?
COMANCHES—
AND THEY DON'T
LOOK TOO
FRIENDLY!

THEY HAVE
THEIR WAR
PAINT ON!
PACKY,
SOMETHING
NASTY'S
HAPPENED!



A SHORT TIME LATER - INTO AN ABANDONED MINE IN SUNDOWN VALLEY RIDES STEVE ADAMS. BUT OUT COMES - STRAIGHT ARROW!

UP, FURY!
ON, GREAT
HORSE!



THE PALOMINO, FURY, STREAKS LIKE A GOLDEN BOLT OF LIGHTNING ACROSS THE BROKEN PRAIRIE...

THIS IS WHERE AS STEVE ADAMS - I LEFT RED CLOUD YESTERDAY. IF WAR IS TO BE PREVENTED, I MUST FIND HIM BEFORE SUNSET. SOMEWHERE NEAR HERE, THE OUTLAWS MUST HAVE ATTACKED HIM...

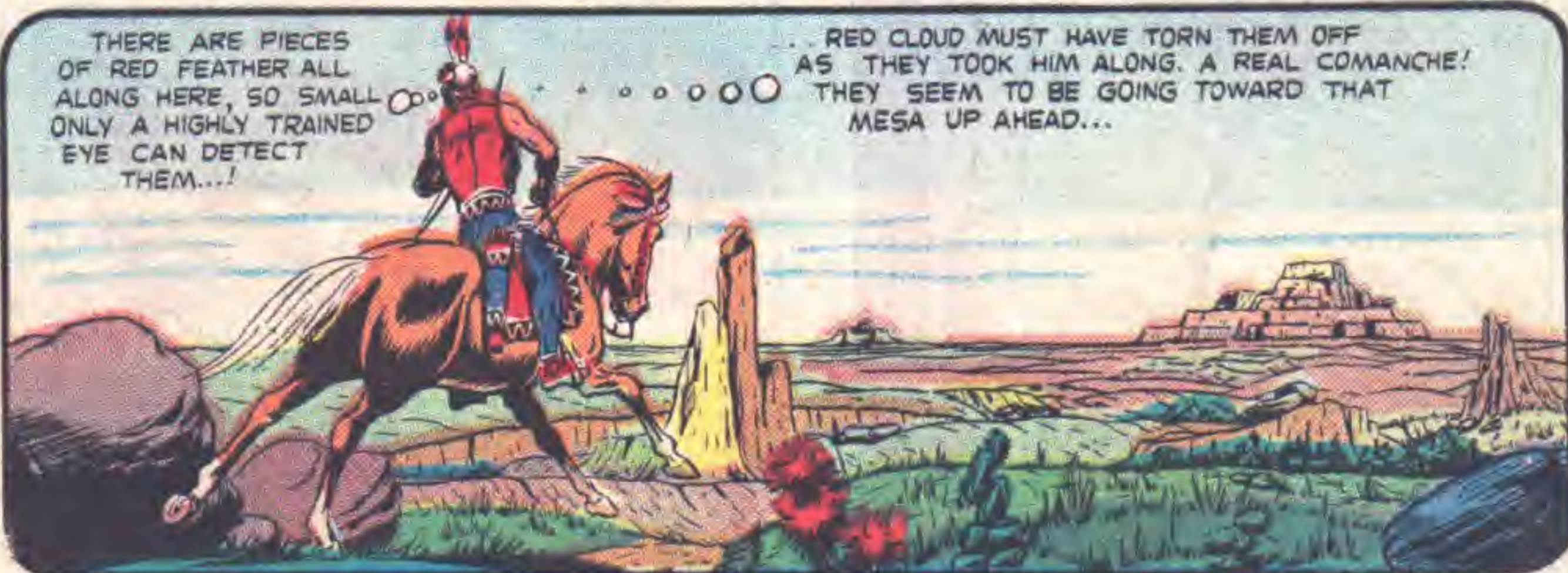


THESE BUSHES ARE TORN, AND THE GROUND CHURNED - A FIGHT TOOK PLACE HERE. NOW, OLD RED CLOUD IS TOO WILY A SCOUT - HE **MUST** HAVE FOUND **SOME** WAY TO MARK THE TRAIL. AH, A TINY PIECE OF THE RED FEATHER HEAD DRESS THE CHIEF WEARS...



THERE ARE PIECES OF RED FEATHER ALL ALONG HERE, SO SMALL ONLY A HIGHLY TRAINED EYE CAN DETECT THEM...

RED CLOUD MUST HAVE TORN THEM OFF AS THEY TOOK HIM ALONG. A REAL COMANCHE! THEY SEEM TO BE GOING TOWARD THAT MESA UP AHEAD...



STUNNER, LOOK! THET, THET'S ST-
STRAIGHT
ARROW
COMIN' THIS WAY!

HAUL UP THE ROPE LADDER! SLOW, NOW - SO HE DON'T NOTICE. ONCE WE HAUL THAT LADDER UP, **NOBODY** KIN GIT UP HYAR, NOT **EVEN** STRAIGHT ARROW!



AH, I SAW THAT! A ROPE LADDER BEING PULLED UP THAT MESA WALL! SO THAT'S WHERE THEY ARE! NOW, HOW TO GET UP THERE? HMMM... I'LL JUST RIDE AWAY, AS THOUGH I DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING...

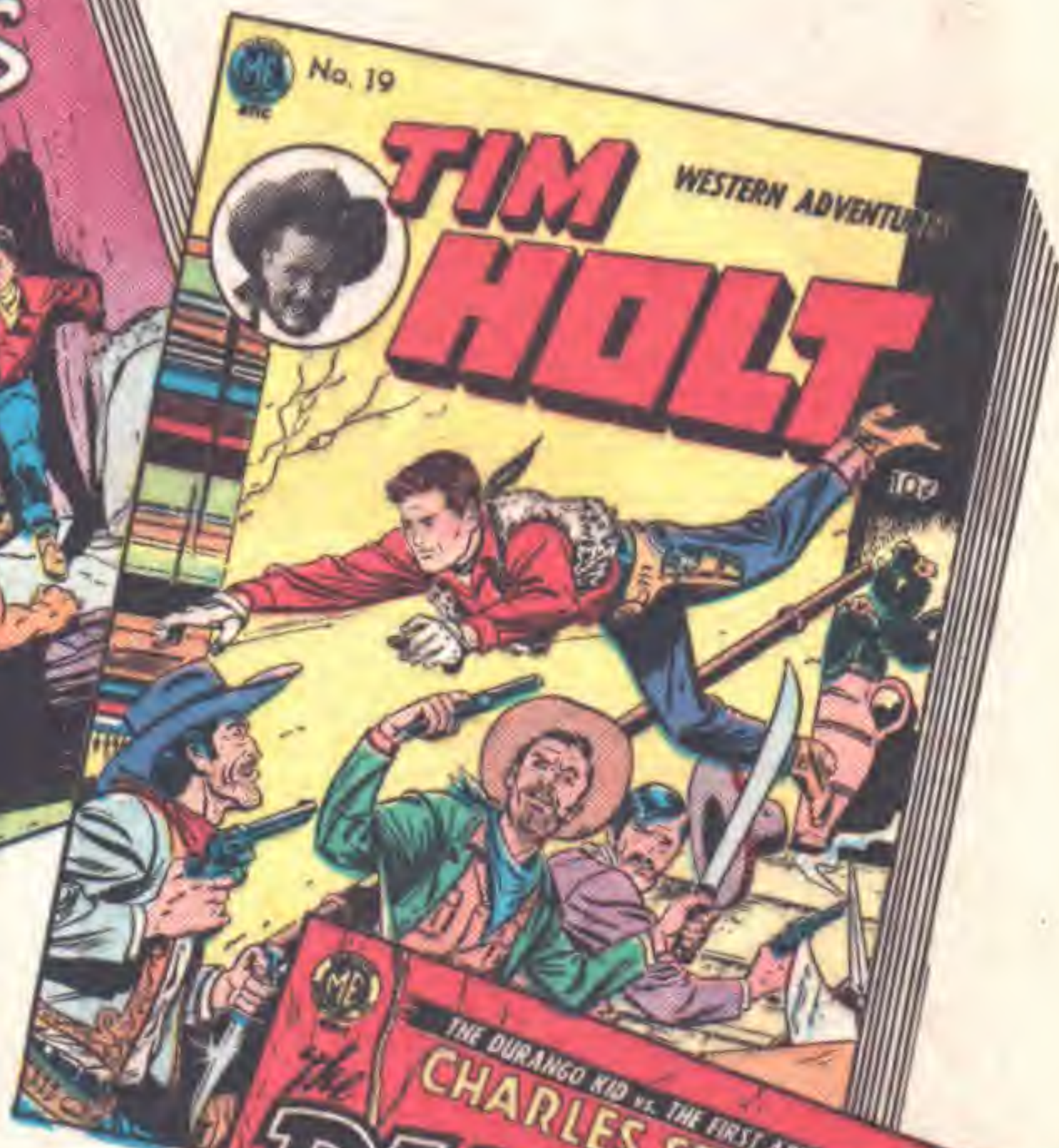


...THERE, NOW! THAT'LL PUT THEM OFF GUARD. I THOUGHT I SAW A POLE FENCE HERE A MOMENT AGO - THERE IT IS! THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO GET UP ON THAT MESA!









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